

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE  
EIGHTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
IN AND FOR SEMINOLE COUNTY,  
FLORIDA

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO.:**  
**08-12-S**  
**SUPERSEDES 04-36-S**

**IN RE:       ADMINISTRATIVE RULES - EMERGENCY COURT OPERATION PROCEDURES  
              FOR SEMINOLE COUNTY**

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**WHEREAS**, Florida Rules of Court (Rule 2.215) provides that the chief judge "*shall exercise administrative supervision over all courts within the judicial circuit in the exercise of judicial powers and over the judges and officers of the court*" and "*shall develop an administrative plan for the efficient and proper administration of all courts within that circuit*", which includes "*the attendance of prosecutors, public defenders, clerks, bailiffs, and other officers of the courts;*" and,

**WHEREAS**, emergency procedures for court operations during *named* hurricanes and other natural disasters will increase the efficiency of jury management and will provide better coordination of first appearances and arraignments; and,

**WHEREAS**, emergency procedures will improve communication and the sharing of information among various state, county, municipal agencies and constitutional officers;

**IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED AND ADJUDGED AS FOLLOWS:**

1. **Activation:** Upon any impending threat of a *named* hurricane or natural disaster, the Chief Judge (or his/her designee) shall have the duty and discretion to activate emergency procedures and practice for the court and shall update the media and all judicial agencies of the court's intentions concerning court closures. This process should begin at least forty-eight (48) hours before any forecasted danger. Upon activation, the Clerk of the Court shall provide the Chief Judge (or designee) with all contact information (phone numbers and addresses) for the designated first appearance clerk, a backup first appearance clerk, or other designated clerk personnel for necessary court functions.

2. Jury Venire: The jury venire shall be postponed or cancelled if the courts are closed. The Chief Judge (or designee) shall notify the Clerk of the Court (or the clerk's designee) and order the jury venire to be cancelled. The Clerk of the Court (or clerk's designee) shall notify all jurors of the postponement or cancellation and the rescheduled reporting date.
3. First Appearance: First appearances shall be conducted by the duty judge at 9:00 AM at the county jail on day(s) when the court is closed. The duty judge shall be responsible for court operations at the jail and may modify, cancel or reschedule first appearances as the situation requires or dictates.
4. In-custody Felony Arraignments: In-custody felony arraignments shall be conducted at the county jail when the court is closed, weather permitting as determined by the Chief Judge. Out-of-custody felony arraignments, and any in-custody felony arraignments that have been cancelled, shall be rescheduled by the clerk as directed by the assigned judge.
5. Sheriff: The Chief Judge (or designee) will coordinate with the Sheriff's Department regarding the facilitation of emergency contact and transportation of key court personnel during a hurricane or natural disaster.

DONE AND ORDERED this 4th day of June, 2008

CLAYTON D. SIMMONS  
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CHIEF JUDGE

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